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OCI No. 1489/66

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Office of Current Intelligence  
25 May 1966

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in South Vietnam  
(As of 9:00 A.M. EDT)

1. The students who are staging a hunger strike in front of the US consulate in Hue have now set up roadblocks on all streets leading to the consulate and are refusing to all access to the building. Vietnamese troops and police are present, but are taking no action against this harassment by the students. The consulate is trying to contact 1st Division commander General Nhuan to have the roadblocks removed. So far, no attempts on the part of the students to enter the consulate have been reported, and no violence has occurred.

2. There are reports that a demonstration and funeral service for the ARVN lieutenant killed by a US helicopter door-gunner on 17 May have been scheduled in Hue tomorrow by Buddhist leaders. This demonstration may turn into a march on the US consulate.

3. There have been further reports of disaffection and disenchantment with the struggle movement on the part of military officers in the Hue area.

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State Department review completed

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4. Commenting on the situation, Ambassador Lodge believes the struggle leaders in Hue are well aware that the US is either unwilling or unable to deflect the Ky regime from its intention to maintain pressure on them. Lodge feels that the best hope of their abandoning their present attitude lies in the possibility of significant defections from the 1st Division to the government side.

#### Saigon

5. There is no evidence as yet that any major Buddhist demonstration has occurred today. Unconfirmed press reports indicate, however, that police broke up attempts by about 1,000 Buddhist followers to break through the barbed wire surrounding the Buddhist Institute. The student demonstrators dispersed earlier today were trying to regain control of the Saigon Students Union building which was retaken by the pro-government students union last night with police help.

6. Buddhist Institute chairman Tam Chau, in Bangkok after attending an international Buddhist conference, has cabled the Institute urging a discontinuation of demonstrations and other forms of protest "in order to make peace with the government." The US Embassy in Saigon believes that Chau may have concluded that the Buddhist struggle is foundering and that he may hope eventually to be in a position to work out some modus vivendi with the government. However, the Embassy believes that Chau, scheduled to visit Kuala Lumpur before returning to Saigon, may delay his return "until the dust has settled."

#### Da Nang

7. Da Nang is apparently quiet today.

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